

Monday, November 22, 2004

Officials learn about Homeland Security plans



Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response Director Michael Hurst responds to a question during the Homeland Security information meeting in Jeffersonville, Indiana in October.

The Indiana State Department of Health teamed with two other state agencies this fall for a series of Homeland Security information meetings.

The ISDH joined the Indiana

Counter-Terrorism and Security Council, and the Indiana State Emergency Management Agency in sponsoring the meetings.

The meetings were held in each of the state's 10 Homeland Security districts, and geared toward a wide array of local officials.

One of the objectives was to get the local officials thinking about the

need to do preparedness planning and exercising on a district-wide basis, instead of just within their own jurisdictions.

Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response Director Mi-

chael Hurst represented the ISDH at the meetings, during which he described the progress that has been made in recent years to improve the state's preparedness for a possible act of bioterrorism.

Hurst also emphasized how this progress has improved the public health sector's ability to respond to other public health threats, highlighting July's hepatitis A clinic in Grant County as an example.

He also explained that much of the money that the agency has received from federal grants has been distributed to local health departments and hospitals to help with local preparedness initiatives.

Hurst also emphasized the State Department of Health's support for increased district planning.

"It is very important for the public health sector to work to-

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Strategic Planning group setting goals, objectives

The Indiana State Department of Health Planning Work Group has completed the series of meetings with ISDH staff to present the proposed mission, vision, values, and priority health initiatives.

Based on the input from staff, the Task Force is moving ahead with forming teams to prepare draft goals, objectives, and activities for the new State Health Performance Plan. The teams cover:

- Chronic diseases/conditions
- Infant mortality and prematurity



- Minority health disparities
- Obesity
- Access to primary care (particularly for underserved populations)
- Health care quality
- Public health infrastructure

Anyone interested in helping

■ <http://www.statehealth.IN.gov> ■

with one of the State Health Performance Plan (SHPP) teams should contact Liz Carroll, Deputy State Health Commissioner, or Joe Hunt, Assistant Commissioner.

The SHPP teams will work quickly to prepare draft documents for review by the ISDH Planning Work Group and Dr. Wilson. The SHPP will shape ISDH budgets and activities for the next two years.

— Joe Hunt

Health program targets schools, communities

“Health and education do go hand-in-hand.”

That is what Tanya Parrish, Indiana State Department of Health Coordinated School Health Program director, told ISDH employees at a recent information session.

In her presentation, Parrish discussed the coordinated efforts between the ISDH and the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) on improving children's health through the school setting.

While DOE works hand-in-hand with the schools, Parrish works with community organizations and individuals.

“My responsibility is to pull in health-related organizations that can have a positive impact on children's health by working with the schools,” said Parrish, adding that she also plans to work with parents of school-aged children.

Designed to reach children during school – what Parrish describes as the “prime time” to reach children – the program aims to teach children the importance of healthy lifestyles, and ensure that the school atmosphere promotes good health and offers options for healthy choices. The Coordinated School Health Program involves parents, teachers, administrators, and communities in this effort.

“There is a role for everyone,” said Parrish. “And everyone has a stake in the health of today's youth.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), provides the five-year grant for this program, which is administered by the DOE.

The Coordinated School Health Program consists of eight interactive components: school environ-

ment; health education; school meals and nutrition; physical education; health services; counseling, psychological, and mental health services; staff wellness; and parent/community partnerships.

“Coordination is key,” said Parrish. “All eight components must work together.”

“There is a role for everyone. And everyone has a stake in the health of today's youth.”

--Tanya Parrish

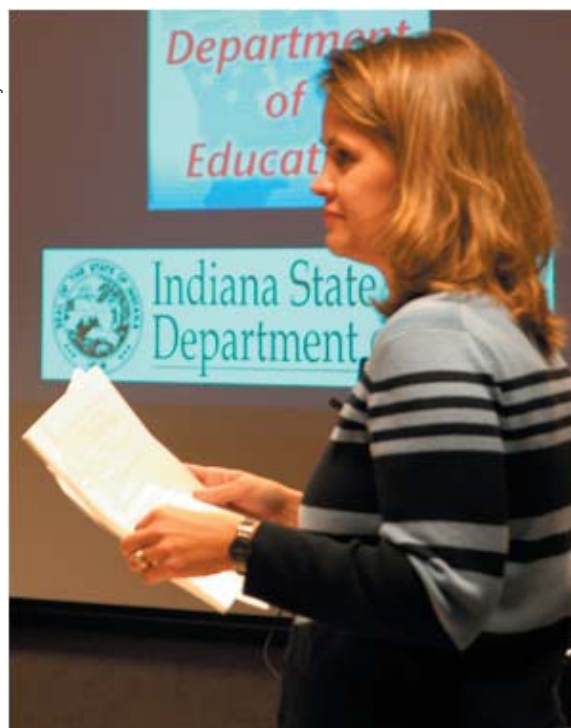
ISDH Coordinated School Health Program Director

Parrish discussed several Hoosier schools and their efforts to provide healthy activities. A few of the examples include:

- ◆ A Yorktown school started a “Walk and Talk Club,” which combines physical activity and socializing.
- ◆ A Westfield school has mapped the miles to San Francisco and is “walking” the distance by tracking steps on pedometers.
- ◆ An Attica school has placed all healthy options in its vending machines.
- ◆ Several schools are implementing “Recess Before Lunch” and “Bounce at the Bell” programs to promote good health.

Through the DOE/ISDH grant, 10 Indiana school corporations are also participating in a leadership program that provides training on coordinated school health.

Photo by Dan Axler



Tanya Parrish, ISDH Coordinated School Health director describes the program to fellow employees at an informational session.

Parrish said, “While we will work with any Indiana school that wants to improve school health, these 10 school corporations will receive intensive training and will serve as model programs.”

The school corporations participating in the Michiana Coordinated School Health Leadership Institute include: Batesville

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The Express Indiana State Department of Health

The Indiana State Department of Health *Express* is a biweekly publication for ISDH employees and stakeholders. Words in blue are links that you can access directly if you read the *Express* online. To submit news items, call (317) 234-2817 or send information to: ISDH *Express*, Office of Public Affairs, 2 N. Meridian St., Section 6G, Indianapolis, IN 46204-3003. Inquiries should be directed to:

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Employee activities planned for December

Get your holiday shopping done early at the Employee Incentive Committee's used book and assorted items sale!

Scheduled for Thursday, December 2, and Friday, December 3 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the sale will be held in Rice Auditorium.

Proceeds will help support EIC events, like the upcoming Year-End Bash. All items will be priced between 50 cents and \$5.

The committee is seeking donations of used paperback and hardback books, CDs, DVDs,

VHS tapes, video games, board games, puzzles, costume jewelry, comic books, and sports and card games.

Items can be dropped off to Mary Keltner, lower level; Marc LoCascio, third floor; Nonie Passley, fourth floor; Teresa Watson, fifth floor; Jennifer Dunlap, Selig; and Phil Zillinger, Labs. Items will be accepted until noon each day of the sale.

Day-of donations should be brought to the auditorium.

For more info, contact LoCascio, at mlocascio@isdh.state.in.us.

Mark your calendars!

The Year-End Bash is scheduled for Wednesday, December 15. Look for more information via GroupWise in the upcoming weeks. The Year-End Bash is sponsored by the Employee Incentive Committee and offers employees an opportunity to eat and mingle with fellow co-worker during the holiday season.



Gilliam honored

Scott Gilliam, Food Protection manager, was honored with the Tim Sullivan Award at the annual



Photo by Dan Axler

Fall Education Conference of the Indiana Environmental Health Association in South Bend on September 27. The award is the association's highest given in the field of Food Protection.

Gilliam has been with the ISDH Food Protection program since 1985. He has been the program's manager since April 1998.

His accomplishments include updating the retail food code in 2000 and 2004, developing the first food protection newsletter for local health departments, and hosting the first food protection symposium.

Official offers tips for safe Thanksgiving meals

When it comes to having a safe Thanksgiving meal, Scott Gilliam, Food Protection manager, has two important tips: don't let anyone who is sick prepare or serve food, and don't leave food out too long.

"It is more common for people to become sick as a result of ill food handlers than from the food itself," said Gilliam.

How long is too long?

Hot food kept at a temperature of less than 135 degrees can safely remain out for four hours (although Gilliam recommends a maximum of two hours). Be especially careful with foods such as gravies, mashed potatoes, turkey and poultry because these foods are considered potentially hazardous and must be handled carefully.

Cold foods that are not kept at a temperature of 40 degrees or colder should also be kept out no longer than four hours.

To keep hot food hot and cold food cold, Gilliam suggests using a food thermometer to know for sure. Keeping hot foods over heat and cold foods in ice or another means of cooling is best.

Is it done, yet?

When cooking a turkey, Gilliam said it is important to make sure it reaches a temperature of 165 degrees or higher by using a meat thermometer. When cooking stuffing inside the turkey, be sure to check the temperature of the stuffing separately and make sure it also reaches 165 degrees.

Watch those hands

As with any meal, Gilliam said it is critical to wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds before preparing, serving, or eating foods. He also warned against touching ready-to-eat foods such as salads, breads, and desserts with bare

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Hoosiers Helping Hoosiers

Indiana State Department of Health employees are invited to participate in the Hoosiers Helping Hoosiers program spearheaded by Governor and Mrs. Kernan.

The program is a collaborative effort of state agencies committed to feeding Indiana's hungry through a statewide non-perishable food and toiletry drive.

Food donations, as well as items like razors, bar soap, laundry detergent, and toothpaste can be dropped off November 22 through December 10 in collection boxes in the 2 North Meridian Street main lobby. Boxes will also be located at the Labs and Weights and Measures.

Items will be delivered to the St. Thomas Aquinas Food Pantry in mid-December.

For more information, contact Marc LoCascio at mlocasci@isdh.state.in.us.

Thanksgiving

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hands. Instead, he said, use serving utensils.

Leftovers

When it comes to all of those holiday leftovers, Gilliam said it is important to properly store them in the refrigerator in closed containers. Because large portions of hot foods such as a gallon of chili take longer

to cool down, they should either be separated into smaller portions, or rapidly chilled with ice so that bacteria will not form. Be sure to reheat hot foods to 165 degrees each time an item is re-served. Don't forget to keep in mind the four-hour rule when serving leftovers, as well.

Health

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Community School Corporation, Brown County Schools, Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporations, Greencastle Community School Corporation, Greenfield Community Schools, Goshen Community Schools, Indianapolis Public Schools, Middlebury Community Schools, Southern Wells Community Schools, and Vigo County School Corporation.

A partnership with the state of

Michigan has given insight into the program.

"We are partnering with Michigan because they have been doing Coordinated School Health for many years and we can learn a lot from their success," said Parrish.

Another channel for Parrish to receive insight is through staff focus groups. ISDH employees who are parents or grandparents of school-aged children are needed to discuss issues related

Plans

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gether with other response agencies in their regions so everyone will know each other and will be familiar with each other's response capabilities if an event were to occur," said Hurst. "This district-wide planning will be a big part of developing and maintaining those relationships."

The proposed "District Councils," as they are being called now, would include representatives from public health, as well as other health care sectors, law enforcement, emergency management, fire, elected officials, and others.

The meetings introduced the concept of District Councils and included some possible suggestions regarding how the proposed councils could be structured, but also left much of the specific decision-making up to the local officials.

Each meeting also included a question and answer period. That initial feedback will now be used to help determine the next steps in the process.

— Andy Zirkle

to school health. The information gathered will help create strategies to involve parents and grandparents in creating healthier schools and healthier students in Indiana.

The focus groups will be held on Friday, December 3, or Monday, December 6 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the Commissioner's Conference Room, Third Floor. Space is limited, and registration is required by contacting Parrish at (317) 234-2864 or tparrish@isdh.state.in.us.